



NEWS RELEASE

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Ellicott City pair charged with largest-ever indoor marijuana-growing operation in Howard County

Howard County police have charged two renters in a home in the 14300 block of Tridelphia Road with running the largest indoor marijuana-grow operation ever discovered in Howard County.

Casey Ann Fowler, 48, and Daniel Earl Sims, 48, were charged with multiple marijuana counts, including manufacturing, production and distribution of the drug, as well as firearms charges, after detectives found large quantities of marijuana being grown and packaged in a sophisticated operation inside the home.

The home had recently been sold at auction and when the new owner stopped by the house, he saw an unknown van parked in the driveway. He contacted police and advised that this seemed suspicious. Officers arrived and detected a strong odor of fresh marijuana while standing in the driveway with the owner. They observed galvanized fans near the heating and air conditioning units, where the odor was strongest.

Officers contacted narcotics detectives, who obtained a search and seizure warrant for the residence. In a search of the basement, detectives found a sophisticated and substantial growing operation, with more than 600 marijuana plants in various stages of maturation. The plants were being grown using sophisticated ventilation, lighting and watering systems. The street value is still being calculated, but a growth cycle of this size could yield as much as \$270,000, according to narcotics detectives.

In a search of the main floor, detectives located an amber-colored paste, known as THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), a concentrated form of marijuana often used in a process known as "dabbing." In dabbing, users inhale vapor from "dabs" of waxy or solid marijuana THC concentrate, creating an intense high from a single inhalation.

Police also found suspected crack cocaine, heroin, prescription pills, and a shotgun in the residence. They seized marijuana packaged in a way that is consistent with intent to distribute, a scale and over \$75,000 cash.

Fowler was at the residence at the time of the search warrant May 6 and was arrested on-scene. She was later released from the Howard County Detention Center on \$50,000 bond. Sims was not at the residence at the time, and a warrant was issued for his arrest. He was located and charged late yesterday and is currently in the detention center on \$45,000 bond.

Howard County police are encouraging anyone with information about drug activity to call the Drug Tip Line at 410-290-DRUG.

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